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ISKULTRIP SCANS
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PLEASE NOTICE...!
GENTOKU...
第三話

...THE SIGNAL!
オオン
ALL FORCES!
RE-TREAT!
RE-TREAT!
オオオオン
IT CAN'T BE...!
WHAT ...?!
THEY'RE RETREATING HERE...?!

ウオオオ
IT'S A FIRE ATTACK!
THEY GOT US...
THE FIRE HAS BEEN LIT!
ROB THE ENEMY GOODS!
ALRIGHT! LET'S TAKE ALL THEIR RATIONS!
FOLLOW ME!
ASSAULT FORT HAKUBOU!
YEAAAAH!
LET'S GO!

おおおお

THANKS TO YOUR STRATEGY, WE WON!
MY... STRA-TEGY?
AH... THAT'S RIGHT.
I...
HANA?
HANA, WHAT'S WRONG?
UHH...
HEY ...
I DID THIS...

WE TRIUMPHED AGAINST THE MOU-TOKU ARMY?!
あ
あ
THAT'S SIR GEN-TOKU FOR YOU!
TIME TO CELE-BRATE!
DRINK UP!
YOU CAN'T GO WRONG FOLLOWING SIR GENTOKU!
TO CELEBRATE THE TRIUMPH OF THE GENTOKU ARMY...
わはは はは
WELL, NOW! I HEARD IT'S ALSO THANKS TO THE NEW TACTICIAN!
OH, I KNOW HER!
IT'S THAT FOREIGN BIG-SISTER!
We played together!
Oh, my
Me, too!
Me, too!
Me, too!
Me, three!

CHEERS!
SIR GENTOKU, CONGRATULATIONS ON WINNING THIS BATTLE.
NO, IT'S ALL THANKS TO EVERYONE.
AND ALSO...
HANA...
HOW MANY DRINKS HAVE YOU CONSUMED, YOKUTOKU?
NOW, NOW, MASTER UNCHOU!
Master Shiryuu, please! Drink up!
No, I'm fine.

I WON'T LET YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND AFTER COMING THIS FAR!
NOW LISTEN, YOU!
HUUHH?!
WANT ME TO SMACK YOU?
THEN... FORGET IT. I'LL JUST RETURN TO MY ROOM.
THIS IS SO EMBARRASSING. I'VE NEVER WORN SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
B-BUT PRINCESS FUYOU!
LISTEN UP, OKAY? WOMEN ARE THE FLAVORS OF A BANQUET.
THERE'S NO WAY I WOULD ALLOW THE PERSON WITH THE GREATEST MERIT TO ATTEND THE BANQUET SO PLAINLY!
IT'S A WEAPON THOSE UNCOUTH MEN WILL NEVER BE CAPABLE OF!
GIVE IT UP!

Eeek!
MAKE YOUR DEBUUUUT!
SO JUST ACCEPT IT
VIP?
GO, AND—
HOP, HOP, HOP!
THERE NOW!
Ah
I~ know~ nothing~
OH, IS IT YOU, HANA?
I'M— SO SORRY...
WOW, YOU LOOK SO DIFFERENT.
OH...

FOR A MOMENT, I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU.
SIR GENTOKU!

FUYOU IS OVER THERE, HAPPILY DINING WITH UNCHOU
IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?
EH?
You dressed up in black for the banquet?! Even the feast is starting to taste bad!
What did you say?!?!
Is that so? Something wrong with Princess Fuyou's taste buds?
HAPPILY?
AH!
FUYOU?
AH, I'M SORRY! PRINCESS FUYOU IS HERE, YET I—
HEY!
MISS TACTICIAN!
AH!
IT'S MISS TACTICIAN!
MISS TACTICIAN HAS ARRIVED!
MASTER YOKUTOKU!
HOW ABOUT A TOAST, MISS TACTICIAN?
YUP!
YUP!
おおおおおお
CHEERS! TO MISS TACTICIAN!
IT'S ALL THANKS TO MISS TACTICIAN THAT WE WON THIS TIME!
WITH MISS TACTICIAN BY OUR SIDE, WE HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR!

WE TRIUMPHED BECAUSE OF YOUR STRATEGY, HANA
I WILL ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR ABILITY.
ME, TOO, AND MOST IMPORTANTLY,
YOU EARN A MERIT FOR NOTICING THE SIGNAL WAS DELAYED.
AS EXPECTED...
OF MISS HANA.
WE ALSO APOLOGIZE
FOR OUR RUDENESS TOWARDS YOU.
CHEERS!
TO MISS TACTICIAN!
CHEEERS!

!
SIGH...
IF YOU'RE NOT COMFORTABLE WITH THAT UNFAMILIAR OUTFIT, YOU SHOULDN'T CONTINUE WEARING IT.
IS THAT SO? I THINK IT SUITS YOU AS WELL.
BUT SIR GENTOKU, I DO THINK IT'S VERY LOVELY.
AH, THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
IT IS.
THE EVENING BREEZE FEELS WONDERFUL.

I KNEW I WANTED YOU.
HUH?
IT WAS AMAZING.
WHEN YOU TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOUR STRATEGY, SOMEHOW I WAS CERTAIN IT WOULD WORK
I HAD NO DOUBTS AT ALL.
AND THEN, WE ENDED UP REALLY WINNING.

YOU HAVE THAT KIND OF EXPRESSION ON YOUR FACE.
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU THAT WE SURVIVED AND CAN LIVE ANOTHER DAY.
AND YET...
GEN TOKU
WHY DO YOU FIGHT?
TO TAKE BACK THE PRIDE AND GLORY OF THE HAN DYNASTY.

TO KNOCK DOWN THE DICTATORSHIP,
SO THAT RIGHTEOUS, LOYAL SUBJECTS CAN SUPPORT THE EMPEROR.
TO ADMINISTER A VIRTUOUS GOVERNMENT FAR AND WIDE.
TO PAVE WAY FOR A WORLD WITHOUT WARS.
I MUST OVERTHROW SOU MOUTOKU, WHO DESPITE BEING A RETAINER,
IS THE DE FACTO RULER OF THE HAN DYNASTY.
THIS IS THE PATH I'VE TAKEN.

THAT ROBE IS A GESTURE OF MY FEELINGS,
HANA
IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE THAT,
I NEED YOUR HELP.
GEN,
HANA
THE PEOPLE ARE WONDERING WHERE THE GUEST OF HONORS ARE
PLEASE RETURN
UNCHOU
SORRY, I'LL RETURN RIGHT AWAY.
HOW ABOUT YOU, HANA? DON'T PUSH YOURSELF.
Thank you very much.
THEN I'LL STAY HERE FOR A WHILE LONGER.

IT'S TRUE MANY OF GENTOKU'S SOLDIERS WERE ABLE TO SURVIVE.
AND IT'S TRUE I WAS THE ONE WHO REQUESTED IT FROM THAT BOOK, BUT..
IT'S ALL THANKS TO YOU!
IT'S THANKS TO YOU WE CAN LIVE ANOTHER DAY.
...HOW ABOUT ME?
GENTOKU DOESN'T HESITATE.

UU...
UUUH...
BUT...

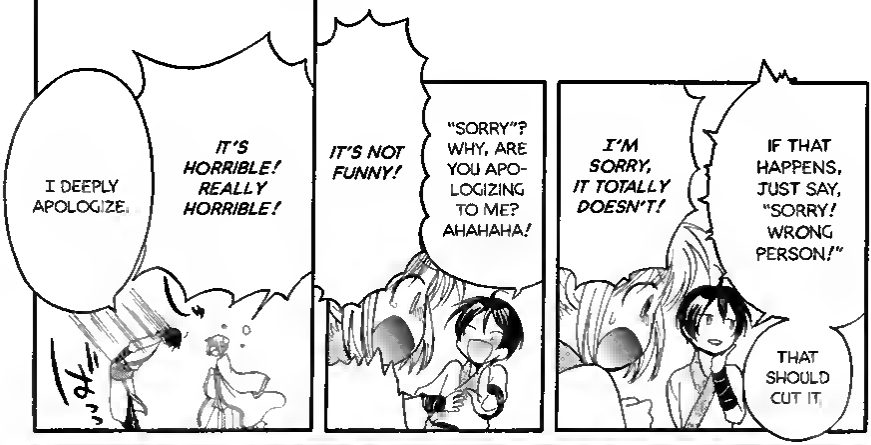
IT HAS COME UPON MY EARS THE RESULTS OF YOUR FIRST BATTLE.
IT APPEARS YOU MAKE A FINE DISCIPLE.
YET, WHY ARE YOU NOT REJOICING?
IS THERE SOMETHING YOU'RE WORRYING ABOUT?
WHAT ARE YOU AGONIZING OVER?
...!

AT THE BEGINNING, YOU CALLED THIS WORLD A "DREAM".
YET, YOU MUST HAVE REALIZED BY NOW
THAT THIS IS "REALITY".
WORKING ALL DAY LONG,
SHARING A MEAL WITH FAMILY, THANKFUL THAT THE DAY ENDS WITHOUT INCIDENT,
AND GOING TO BED WORRYING ABOUT TOMORROW ..
IT IS LIKE THIS DAY AFTER DAY, CONSTANTLY AT THE MERCY OF THIS TURBULENT WORLD.
LIVING TODAY
DOES NOT GUARANTEE LIVING TOMORROW.
THEY'RE FIGHTING TO SURVIVE.

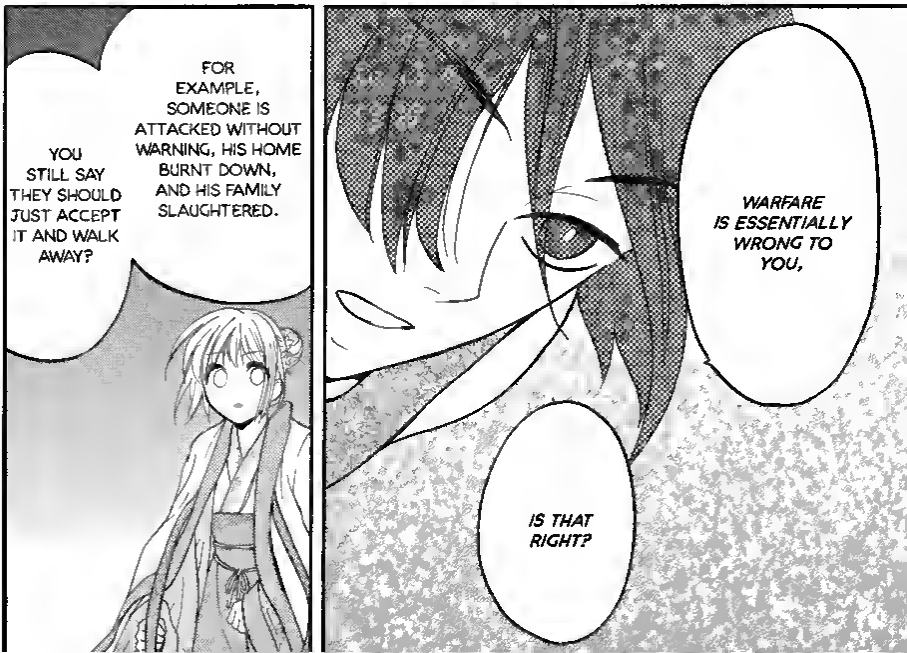
ARE YOU SAYING ....
IT'S SIMPLY COMMON SENSE?
ARE YOU SAYING...
DEATH IS INEVITABLE?!
IS THAT KIND OF SCENE NORMAL?!
AM I WRONG IN THINKING THAT'S WEIRD?
IN THE FIRST PLACE,
WHY DID YOU EVEN SAY I WAS YOUR DISCIPLE?
KOUMEI!

NOW, NOW, HANA. YOU MAY ASK ME SO MANY QUESTIONS,
BUT I CAN ONLY ANSWER ONE AT A TIME.
BUT SEEING YOU SO ENTHUSIASTIC LIKE THIS, I RECKON YOU'RE FEELING BETTER NOW.
I CALLED YOU MY DISCIPLE SO AS TO GIVE YOU AN IDENTITY YOU CAN IDENTIFY WITH.
ANYTHING ELSE?
THAT KIND OF SCENE IS NORMAL AND COMMON-PLACE.
EVERY FEELING IS NEITHER RIGHT NOR WRONG.

INDEED! NOW YOU GET IT. YOU SHOULD BE MORE THANKFUL...
THAT'S... KIND OF TRUE. WITHOUT MY IDENTITY AS KOUMEI'S DISCIPLE,
THEY MIGHT HAVE LEFT ME BY MYSELF.
OH!
IS THAT THE ROBE YOU RECEIVED AS YOUR STATUS AS TACTICIAN?
THIS PERSON IS...
MASTER KOUMEI?
HE'S NOT WHAT I PICTURED ...
BUT...!
That's not a compliment!
PUT IT ON, PUT IT ON!
AWW, IT LOOKS SO NICE! THIS CUTE CLOTH REALLY FITS YOU!
WHAT WOULD'VE HAPPENED IF YOU PRESENTED ME AS YOUR SUBSTITUTE TO THE MILITARY COUNCIL AND I TURNED OUT TO BE USE-LESS?

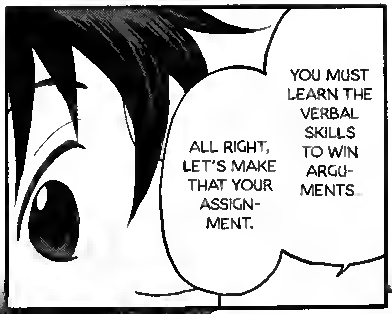

I DEEPLY APOLOGIZE.
IT'S HORRIBLE! REALLY HORRIBLE!
IT'S NOT FUNNY!
"SORRY"? WHY, ARE YOU APOLOGIZING TO ME? AHAHAHA!
I'M SORRY, IT TOTALLY DOESN'T!
IF THAT HAPPENS, JUST SAY, "SORRY! WRONG PERSON!"
THAT SHOULD CUT IT.

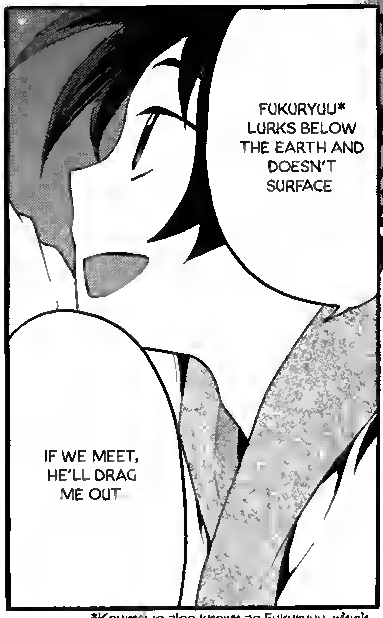
WELL, THEN...
GEEZ, MASTER KOUMEI—


FOR EXAMPLE, SOMEONE IS ATTACKED WITHOUT WARNING, HIS HOME BURNT DOWN, AND HIS FAMILY SLAUGHTERED.
YOU STILL SAY THEY SHOULD JUST ACCEPT IT AND WALK AWAY?
WARFARE IS ESSENTIALLY WRONG TO YOU,
IS THAT RIGHT?

I...
I DON'T WANT TO JUSTIFY ELIMINATING ANYONE!
WHAT WILL YOU DO, THEN, IF IT'S WRONG TO ELIMINATE SOMEONE, AND YET INVASION IS NOT AN OPTION?
THAT ...
THAT'S ...
YOU FIGHT.
RIGHT NOW, YOU'RE UNDER THE PROTECTION OF RYUU GENTOKU. YOU HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO.
SHOULD YOU NOT ELIMINATE SOU MOUTOKU, WHO SEEKS TO INVADE YOU?
WELL ...
IT WOULD BE GREAT IF NOBODY ATTACKS
HA HA.
THUS, NO NEED FOR BLOOD-SHED.
YOU CAN CONTROL PEOPLE'S HEARTS?
SO, WHAT, YOU THINK YOU'RE SOME KIND OF GOD?

"I WANT TO PLAY GOD!"
MAY—
MAYBE I'M BEING NAIVE, BUT—
YOU CAN BLUFF AND DO ANYTHING.
BOTTOM LINE, YOU HAVE TO TAKE CONTROL OF THE CONVERSATION.
Huh...
WHETHER BY COERCION OR BY FORCE, IT'S IMPORTANT FOR A TACTITIAN TO BE CAPABLE OF PERSUADING OTHERS.
THAT'S HOW YOU SHOULD HAVE ANSWERED
EVEN BETTER IF YOU FOLLOWED IT UP WITH,
"THAT IS EXACTLY MY ROLE AND MISSION!"
UH...
MASTER KOUMEI?
HUH?
...





*Koumei is also known as Fukuryuu, which means "Hidden Dragon"

DON'T TELL ME I WAS MADE YOUR DISCIPLE BECAUSE YOU WANTED TO ESCAPE FROM GENTOKU...?
Stars
AT LEAST, THAT'S WHAT THE STARS SAY.
CALL ME TEACHER!
MASTER KOUMEI!
SEE YOU!
...WHAT A WEIRDO.
I THINK I FEEL A LITTLE BETTER.
HE SEEMS LIKE A KIND PERSON, BUT HE'S VERY MYSTERIOUS...
HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE A TEACHER AT ALL...
TEACHER ...
IN THE END
WHAT DID HE COME HERE FOR?

...WHAT ARE YOU AGONIZING OVER?
TO OVERTHROW THE DICTATORSHIP...
MY PATH IS...
THIS IS THE PATH I'VE TAKEN.
PATH...?